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NATH & ASSOCIATES 112 South West Street Alexandria, VA 22314				YAGER, JAMES C
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
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**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>
	10/553,188	LIGTENBERG ET AL.
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>
	JAMES YAGER	1794

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 July 2008.

2a) This action is **FINAL**.                    2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-3,5-11 and 13-20 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-3, 5-11 and 13-20 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ .	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

## DETAILED ACTION

### ***Response to Amendment***

1. The amendment filed 7 July 2008 has been entered, claims 1-3, 5-11 and 13-20 are pending in the application.
2. Applicants amendment overcomes all rejections under 35 U.S.C §112.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 9, 10, 14 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. (GB 1214330).

Regarding claims 9, 10, 14 and 18, Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. discloses a pipe sleeve (P3/L20-30) made of mineral wool for insulating pipelines, the pipe sleeve being formed of a would nonwoven web with cured binder, characterized in that there is at least one reinforcing layer on the inner side of the pipe and/or enclosed at at least part of the boundary between successive wound layers (P3/L20-40, P3/L75-85, Fig. 2), characterized in that the reinforcing layer is enclosed within the wound layers (Fig. 2), characterized in that a reinforcing layer in the form of a trickle guard is wound

circumferentially around it (P3/L35-40, Fig. 2), characterized in that the reinforcing layer is a glass nonwoven, a woven glass fiber fabric, (P3/L35-40, nonwoven glass fiber), characterized in that the reinforcing layer is provided with means for allowing separation of wound layers in order to reduce external or internal diameter of the pipe (P3/L40-45, slit).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

7. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation

under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

8. Claims 1, 2, 6-8 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. (GB 1214330), in view of Blau et al. (US 3,346,016).

Regarding claims, 1, 2, 6, 7 and 19, Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. discloses a process for producing pipe sleeves (P1/L10-15, laminated pipe covering) made of mineral wool (P3/L35-40) for insulating pipelines or for reducing the sound level in pipeline systems, comprising the following steps: a) providing a nonwoven web made of mineral wool which is provided with an uncured binder (P3/L80-85), b) winding up the nonwoven web on a winding mandrel of a winder (P3/L30-35), c) curing the binder (P4/L15-20), characterized in that at least one reinforcing layer is provided before the nonwoven web runs into the winder, in such a way that during the winding the said reinforcing layer becomes a constituent part of the pipe sleeve produced as a result (P3/L35-40, P3/L55-60), characterized in that the at least one reinforcing layer is applied to the nonwoven web in such a way that it is wound up with it and, following winding, is present within the pipe sleeve (P3/L30-40), characterized in that the reinforcing layer is a glass nonwoven, a woven glass fiber fabric (P3/L35-40, nonwoven glass fiber), characterized in that the reinforcing layer is wetted with additional binder before being provided for the winding operation (P3/L80-85). Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. further discloses that the reinforcing layer

comes to lie on the outside of the pipe sleeve with the effect of a lamination, as the last layer arranged around the full circumference (Fig. 2). Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. does not disclose that the reinforcing layer is added to the trailing end of the nonwoven web.

Blau et al. discloses a process for producing pipe sleeves (C5/L55-60) comprising a) providing a nonwoven web made of mineral wool (C4/L15-20) b) winding up the nonwoven web on a winding mandrel of a winder, characterized in that at least one reinforcing layer is provided before the nonwoven web runs into the winder, in such a way that during the winding the said reinforcing layer becomes a constituent part of the pipe sleeve produced as a result (C5/L55-70). Blau discloses that the reinforcing layer is added to the trailing end of the nonwoven web (C5/L55-65).

Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. and Blau et al. are analogous art because they both teach about processes of producing pipe sleeves comprising winding up nonwoven webs and reinforcing layers on a winding mandrel of a winder. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add the reinforcing layer to the trailing end of the nonwoven web as described by Blau et al. in the process of Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. Doing so would amount to nothing more than a use of a known method step for its intended use in a known environment to accomplish entirely expected result.

Regarding claim 8, modified Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. discloses all of the claim limitations as set forth above. Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. further discloses a pipe sleeve (P3/L35-45) made of mineral wool for insulating pipelines or for reducing the sound level

in pipeline systems, the pipe sleeve being formed of a wound nonwoven web with cured binder produced by means of a process according to claim 1 (P3/L30-40, P3/L80-85).

9. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. (GB 1214330) in view of Blau et al. (US 3,346,016), as applied to claim 1 above, in view of Hofmann (US 3,824,140).

Regarding claim 5, modified Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. discloses all of the claim limitations as set forth above. Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. does not disclose that the reinforcing layer is applied to the mandrel before the winding of the nonwoven web in such a way that it provides the inner surface of the pipe sleeve determining the clear internal diameter of the pipe sleeve. Hofmann discloses a process for producing pipe sleeves for insulating pipelines comprising a) providing a nonwoven web (C2/L40-45) b) winding up the nonwoven web on a winding mandrel of a winder (C3/L40-50), characterized in that at least one reinforcing layer is provided (C1/L45-50, metal foil layer) before the nonwoven web runs into the winder, in such a way that during the winding the said reinforcing layer becomes a constituent part of the pipe sleeve produced as a result (Fig. 3). Hofmann further discloses that the reinforcing layer is applied to the mandrel before the winding of the nonwoven web in such a way that it provides the inner surface of the pipe sleeve determining the clear internal diameter of the pipe sleeve (Fig. 3).

Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. and Hofmann are analogous art because they both teach about processes of producing pipe sleeves comprising winding up nonwoven webs and reinforcing layers on a winding mandrel of a winder. Therefore it would have been

obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to apply the reinforcing layer to the mandrel before the winding of the nonwoven web in such a way that it provides the inner surface of the pipe sleeve determining the clear internal diameter of the pipe sleeve as described by Hofmann in the process of Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. Doing so would amount to nothing more than a use of a known method step for its intended use in a known environment to accomplish entirely expected result.

10. Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. (GB 1214330) in view of Blau et al. (US 3,346,016), as applied to claim 2 above, in view of Roth (US 5,056,564).

Regarding claim 3, modified Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. discloses all of the claim limitations as set forth above. Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. discloses that the reinforcing layer is placed on the nonwoven web and is then wound up together with the latter (P3/L35-40, P3/L55-60). Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. does not disclose that the reinforcing layer comprises a plurality of separate strips. Roth discloses a process for producing pipe sleeves (C1/L10-15) comprising a) providing a nonwoven web made of mineral wool (C1/L15-16) b) winding up the nonwoven web on a winding mandrel of a winder, characterized in that at least one reinforcing layer is provided before the nonwoven web runs into the winder, in such a way that during the winding the said reinforcing layer becomes a constituent part of the pipe sleeve produced as a result (C1/L15-20). Roth discloses that the reinforcing layer comprises a plurality of separate strips (C2/L40-52, bracing strips). Roth further discloses that providing the reinforcing layer in strips provides helps the sleeve to conform to the surface of the pipe (C2/L40-60).

Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. and Roth are analogous art because they both teach about processes of producing pipe sleeves comprising winding up nonwoven webs and reinforcing layers on a winding mandrel of a winder. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the reinforcing layer in the form of strips as taught by Roth in the process of Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. to provide a process of making a pipe sleeve wherein the sleeve more easily conforms to the shape of the pipe.

11. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. (GB 1214330), as applied to claim 9 above, in view of Roth (US 5,056,564).

Regarding claim 11, modified Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. discloses all of the claim limitations as set forth above. Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. does not disclose that the reinforcing layer comprises a plurality of separate strips.

Roth discloses a pipe sleeve (Fig. 3) made of mineral wool (C2/L40-45) with at least one reinforcing layer (C2/L49-52, bracing strips). Roth further discloses that providing the reinforcing layer in strips helps the sleeve to conform to the surface of the pipe (C2/L40-60).

Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. and Roth are analogous art because they both teach about pipe sleeves made of mineral wool comprising nonwoven webs and reinforcing layers. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide the reinforcing layer in the form of strips as

taught by Roth in the pipe sleeve of Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. to provide a pipe sleeve wherein that more easily conforms to the shape of the pipe.

12. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lauren (US 4,576,206) in view of Seitz (GB 2032845).

Regarding claim 13, Lauren discloses a pipe sleeve made of mineral wool (C1/L15-25), characterized in that it has at least one reinforcing layer (C2/L33-36) which provides the inner surface of the pipe sleeve that determines the clear internal diameter of the pipe sleeve (Fig. 1). Lauren does not disclose a reinforcing layer in the form of a trickle guard would circumferentially around it.

Seitz discloses an insulating shell for thermal insulation of pipelines (i.e. a pipe sleeve) (P2/L1-5), comprising rock wool (i.e. mineral wool) having an outer layer of glass wool (i.e. reinforcing layer in the form of a trickle guard) (P2/L10-16). Seitz discloses that the outer layer of glass wool improves the rigidity and substantially facilitates handling (P2/L13-15). It is clear that since the outer layer is made of the same material and has the same structure as the instantly claimed trickle guard, it is inherently a trickle guard.

Lauren and Seitz are analogous art because they both teach about pipe sleeves. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the outer layer of Seitz into the pipe sleeve of Lauren to provide a pipe sleeve that has improved rigidity and is easier to handle.

The recitation that the pipe sleeve is for sound-level reduction in pipeline systems, in particular of heating installations or ventilation systems, does not confer

patentability to the claim since the recitation of an intended use does not impart patentability to otherwise old compounds or compositions. *In re Tuominen*, 671 F.2d 1359, 213 USPQ 89 (CCPA 1982).

13. Claims 9, 15, 16 and 20, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blau et al. (US 3,346,016) in view of Seitz (GB 2032845).

Regarding claims 9, 15, 16 and 20, Blau discloses a pipe sleeve (C2/L19-25) made of mineral wool (C4/L15-16) for insulating pipelines, the pipe sleeve being formed of a wound nonwoven web with cured binder (C4/L10-25, C5/L60-65), characterized in that there is at least one reinforcing layer (C5/L64-66, aluminum foil) enclosed at least part of the boundary between successive wound layers (C5/L55-70), characterized in that the reinforcing layer contains particulate material (C4/L30-35), characterized in that the reinforcing layer includes a foil material (C4/L70-75). Blau does not disclose a reinforcing layer in the form of a trickle guard would circumferentially around it.

Seitz discloses an insulating shell for thermal insulation of pipelines (i.e. a pipe sleeve) (P2/L1-5), comprising rock wool (i.e. mineral wool) having an outer layer of glass wool (i.e. reinforcing layer in the form of a trickle guard) (P2/L10-16). Seitz discloses that the outer layer of glass wool improves the rigidity and substantially facilitates handling (P2/L13-15). It is clear that since the outer layer is made of the same material and has the same structure as the instantly claimed trickle guard, it is inherently a trickle guard.

Blau and Seitz are analogous art because they both teach about pipe sleeves. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the

invention was made to incorporate the outer layer of Seitz into the pipe sleeve of Blau to provide a pipe sleeve that has improved rigidity and is easier to handle.

14. Claim 17 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. (GB 1214330), as applied to claim 9 above, in view of Hartranft et al. (US 5,457,136).

Regarding claim 17, modified Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. discloses all of the claim limitations as disclosed above. Modified Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. does not disclose that the reinforcing layer is treated with a biocide agent. Hartranft et al. discloses a pipe sleeve (C2/L45-5) comprising a reinforcing layer (C3/L65-67) that is treated with a biocide to impart bacterial or fungal resistance to the sleeve (C8/L1-10).

Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. and Hartranft et al. are analogous art because they both teach about pipe sleeves comprising reinforcing layers. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to add biocide to the reinforcing layer as taught by Hartranft et al. in the pipe sleeve of Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. to provide a pipe sleeve that is resistant to bacteria or fungi.

### ***Response to Arguments***

15. Applicant's arguments filed 7 July 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues:

Claim 1 has been amended to include a reinforcing layer added to the trailing end of the nonwoven web. With respect to this feature, found in claim 4, rejected by the Examiner under Item 13 over the B-E-H Inc. '330 patent in view of the Blau et al. '01h patent, Applicants note that the Examiner also states that the B-E-H Inc. '330 patent does not disclose the features of claim 4 according to which the reinforcing layer is added to the

trailing end of the nonwoven web. In this regard, he specifically refers to the Blau et al. '01h patent, asserting that such a feature is disclosed in column 5, lines 55-65. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner, and agree that Blau et al. '016 patent teaches to roll a glass fiber felt on a mandrel, wherein upon completion of the first revolution an aluminum foil will be inserted between the convolutions of the fiber felt with continuing the wrapping & the foil until five complete continuous spirals of foil are formed. Afterwards, the glass

fiber felt will be further rolled by winding so as to create the pipe sleeve. This construction is shown in the figure of the Blau et al. '016 patent.

Hence, there is *no* disclosure in the Blau et al. '016 patent to add a reinforcing layer to the trailing end of the nonwoven web.

Given the broad disclosure of "trailing end" and given that Blau discloses that the glass fiber layer is wound on a roll, then after one revolution, the reinforcing layer is wound onto the roll, it is clear that Blau discloses that the reinforcing layer is added to the trailing end of the glass fiber layer.

16. Applicant's arguments filed 7 July 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues:

In addition, the Blau et al. '016 patent does not disclose a pipe sleeve having a reinforcing layer arranged around the full circumference of the sleeve body.

Applicant's argument is unpersuasive because Blau was not used to teach that the sleeve has a reinforcing layer arranged around the full circumference of the sleeve body. Blau was only used to show that it is common practice in the art to add the reinforcing layer to the trailing end of the web. Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. discloses that the reinforcing layer comes to lie on the outside of the pipe sleeve with the effect of a lamination, as the last layer arranged around the full circumference (Fig. 2).

17. Applicant's arguments filed 7 July 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues:

Applicants also note that the Examiner has stated under Item 5 of the Official Action that the features of claim 12 should be known by the B-E-H Inc. '330 patent. However, under correct consideration of the teaching of the cited paragraph on page 3, lines 35-40, Applicants respectfully submit that the complete teaching in this regard is that superimposed mats of

Art Unit: 1794

different fibrous material are spirally wound into a two layer form with one layer being the outer layer and made of glass fibers, while the other layer creating the intermediate layers is made of mineral wool.

Firstly, Applicants note that no explicit teaching is given in the B-E-H Inc. '330 patent to provide a reinforcing layer at the outer circumferentially side of a sleeve body which is wound all around, thereof. Moreover, no teaching is given that such outer layer may act as a trickle guard.

Applicant's arguments are unpersuasive because Baldwin-Ehret-Hill Inc. clearly discloses that the outer layer is glass fiber layer (reinforcing layer) and every other layer is made of glass fiber. Therefore, there is a reinforcing layer that is wound circumferentially around it, and any one of the other layers can be considered a reinforcing layer that is enclosed at at least part of the boundary between successive bound layers.

Regarding applicant's argument that there is no teaching that the outer layer may act as a "trickle guard", it is clear that since the outer layer is made of the same material and has the same structure as the instantly claimed trickle guard, it is inherently a trickle guard.

18. Applicant's arguments filed 7 July 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues:

Additionally, Applicants note that according to this piece of art, the process starts with two mats superimposed with each other. Applicants respectfully submit that if one were to put a couple of mats onto a mandrel and wind it thereon revolution by revolution, it is clear to someone of ordinary skill in the art that, because of the different diameters acting on each of the mats, the trailing ends thereof will not rest on the same place at the outside of the finished sleeve. In other words, the trailing end of the outer layer will rest at the sleeve body at a position where the trailing end of the inner layer is not reached. Thus, the outer layer of such construction typically does not completely surround the roll so that the second layer will be visible from the outside.

In response to applicant's argument that the references fail to show certain features of applicant's invention, it is noted that the features upon which applicant relies

(i.e., that the outer layer of the construction completely surrounds the roll so that the second layer is not visible from the outside) are not recited in the rejected claim(s). Although the claims are interpreted in light of the specification, limitations from the specification are not read into the claims. See *In re Van Geuns*, 988 F.2d 1181, 26 USPQ2d 1057 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

***Conclusion***

19. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

20. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JAMES YAGER whose telephone number is (571)270-

3880. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon - Thurs, 7:30am-5pm, EST, Alt. Friday off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Callie Shosho can be reached on 571 272-1123. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

JY 9/11/08

/Callie E. Shosho/  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1794